



CONSUMERS' AWARENESS AND PREFERENCE TOWARDS SELECTED HEALTH DRINKS

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Cite This Article: Dr. M. Chithirai Selvan & M. Sobika, "Consumers' Awareness and Preference Towards Selected Health Drinks", International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Modern Education, Volume 4, Issue 1, Page Number 158-160, 2018.

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Abstract:

Today the people are busy with their regular activities and hence they need energy but find less time to take care of their health. In order to boost up their energy level, there are number of variety of branded health drinks available in the market. The main objective of the study is to understand the consumers' awareness and preference towards the specified brands of health drinks. Convenience sampling method has been adopted to determine the sample size. Pollachi Taluk is the study area. A total of 210 consumers are taken as sample for the study. The study makes use of statistical techniques such as simple percentage and friedman rank test in analyzing the data. The study reveals that most of the consumers preferred the brand, 'Boost' followed by 'Horlicks', 'Bournvita', etc. and 'taste', 'quality' and 'price' are the most persuading factors in purchasing the specific health drinks.

Key Words: Selected Brand of Health Drinks, Consumers, Awareness & Preference

Introduction:

Today health and well-being are the two fundamental factors of human consumption. But people is getting less time to allot for healthy cooking and eating and thus results in an increasing tendency to step towards liquid foods that are simple to prepare and consume. To exploit this trend, the health drink companies are manufacturing a variety of health drinks to make one energetic and brilliant and also to give the goodness of malt. The Health Food Drinks (HFDs) category in India consists of white drinks and brown drinks. South and East India are huge markets for these drinks, registering for the major percentage of all India sales. White drinks account for roughly two-thirds of the market. Presently, brown drinks, which are cocoa-based, persist to rise at the cost of white drinks such as Horlicks and Complan. Health drinks have appeared as the most lucrative and mounting piece of the overall soft drinks industry in the World. Unlike carbonated drinks, whose sales are decreasing, the sales of health drinks have been rising over the years. When measured to the other food supplements, health drinks place the top most of any other thing in this world. A recent study has revealed that in excess of food supplements, consumers favored health drinks. This is for the reason that the food supplements have side effects, and on the other side, there is no such kind in the increase of the health. However, the health drinks are of good taste and on the health constraints, the increase of the health drinks are realized very much after a constant and regular use of the health drinks (Kalakumari and Sekar, 2013).

Statement of the Problem:

Today, health drinks takes part a major role in fulfilling the wants of the consumers in terms of their health status. A lot of companies which have recognized name in the arena of business have also come out as the makers of new brands of health drinks and hence today consumers find a number of health drinks in the market such as Horlicks, Boost, Viva, Milo, Maltova, etc. As a result, consumers find it extremely tough to recollect and remember those brands offered in the market. Moreover, it is witnessed that consumers' preference varies from brand to brand on the basis of quality, price, advertisement, income, age, sex or other characteristics (Sekar and Thangavel, 2016). This leads to the following queries: what is the quantum of consumers' level of awareness on the preferred brands of health drinks? What factors stimulate their preference?

Review of Literature:

Sathyaprasad and Siddiq (2017) in their study observe that a greater part of the consumers are highly aware of product details like date of expiry and flavor of the product whereas a least number of consumers are not aware of taxes of the product. Latha and Nirmala (2016) carried out a study with view to determine the effect of age on consumers' health drinks preference. They observe that a greater part of the respondents who belong between 21 and 30 years age group prefer to buy health drinks. Sekar and Thangavel (2016) in their study find that a greater part of the respondents are conscious of the health drinks through advertisements and the rationale for choosing the specific brand is taste. Deepa Chandran and Philo Francis (2016) in their study found that lack of information and advertisements in the public media leads to low level of awareness among the selected respondents. Moreover, most of the respondents are unaware of the Neera, a novel health drink. Akshay Shrotriya (2015) in his article discloses that a greater part of the respondents are extremely aware of the different

ingredients of the health food drinks. Kalakumari and Sekar (2013) discloses that easy accessibility and rational benefits are the basis for upholding the same brand. Udhayakumari and Vijayalakshmi (2013) find that advertisement and taste are the major factors responsible for the success of Horlicks. Jamuna and Tamil Vanan (2012) in their article find that a larger part of the respondents are highly aware of boost and it is mostly persuaded by television advertisement. Rahaman, Jayaprakash and Venkateswara Rao (2012) in their article reveals that advertisement and attributes of the brand are motives for preferring health drinks. Tamil Selvi and Kirubaharan (2011) discovers that advice of doctors, advertisement and family members are the motivating factors to buy health drinks.

Objectives of the Study:

- ✓ To understand the consumers' awareness towards the preferred brands of health drinks
- ✓ To ascertain the consumers' preference towards the selected health drinks

Methodology:

The current study is predominantly based on primary data which is obtained through issue of questionnaire to the consumers of selected brands of health drinks namely, Horlicks, Boost, Bournvita, Complan, Viva and Milo in Pollachi Taluk. The questionnaire includes questions pertaining to socio-economic profile of sample consumers, their details of purchasing the selected brands of health drinks, awareness and preference towards the selected health drinks. The necessary data for the study have been obtained through issue of 210 questionnaires to the consumers of selected brands of health drinks namely, Horlicks, Boost, Bournvita, Complan, Viva and Milo in Pollachi Taluk. Out of the whole 250 questionnaires issued, 222 questionnaires are obtained and of the 222 questionnaires gathered, 210 questionnaires are considered for scrutiny as twelve of them are found to be unfinished. Convenience sampling technique has been adopted to collect the data from the sample consumers. The data collected are appraised using simple percentage and Friedman rank test.

Findings of the Study:

Socio-Economic Profile of the Consumers:

- ✓ Majority of 111 (52.86%) sample consumers belong to village area
- ✓ Majority i.e. 108 (51.43%) consumers belong to up to 25 years age group
- ✓ Larger part of the sample consumers, 165 (78.57%) are female
- ✓ Most of the consumers i.e. 103 (49.05%) are graduates
- ✓ Most of consumers, 54 (25.71%) are students
- ✓ Most of 98 (46.67%) consumers have two and three earning members in their family
- ✓ Most of 91 (43.33%) consumers have two and three non-earning members in their family
- ✓ Larger part of the consumers i.e. 81 (38.57%) have three to five members in their family
- ✓ Majority of 153 (72.86%) consumers belong to nuclear family
- ✓ Larger part of the consumers i.e. 152 (72.38%) are members in their family
- ✓ Most of 71 (33.81%) consumers earnings per month is between Rs.10,001 and Rs.20,000
- ✓ Majority of 106 (50.48%) consumers' family income per month is up to Rs.15,000

Details of Purchasing Selected Health Drinks:

- ✓ Most of the consumers i.e. 69 (32.85%) purchase the selected health drinks for above one to three years
- ✓ Most of 87 (41.43%) consumers have purchased health drinks as per the suggestions of their parents
- ✓ Larger part of the consumers i.e. 98 (46.67%) have purchased the selected health drinks from departmental store followed by retail shop and wholesale shop
- ✓ Most of the consumers i.e. 64 (30.505) purchase 200 gram per month
- ✓ Most of 83 (39.52%) consumers have the habit of purchasing health drinks once-in-a-month
- ✓ Larger part of the consumers i.e. 108 (51.43%) preferred to drink twice-a-day
- ✓ Majority of 107 (51.95%) consumers are not cross checking the weight of the health drinks they purchase
- ✓ Larger part of the respondents i.e. 174 (82.86%) are checking the MRP before buying the product

Awareness towards the Preferred Brand of Health Drinks:

- ✓ Most of 75 (35.71%) consumers are aware of health drinks for more than five years
- ✓ Most of the consumers i.e. 83 (39.53%) came to know about health drinks through their family members followed by relatives, doctors and neighbors
- ✓ Most of 59 (28.10%) consumers have identified the brand through its logo followed by packing, trademark and symbol
- ✓ The Friedman test reveals that among the various attributes which the consumers are aware of the most, date of expiry of the product was ranked as first followed by manufactures of the product, price of the product, colour of the product and the like

Consumers' Preference towards Health Drinks:

- ✓ Most of 87 (41.43%) consumers preferred the brand 'Boost' followed by 'Horlicks', 'Bournvita' and the like

- ✓ Larger part of the consumers i.e. 117 (55.71%) depict that *taste* is the major motivating factor to purchase the specific brand followed by quality, brand name, price, etc
- ✓ Majority of 126 (60.00%) consumers preferred bottle packing followed by refill and pet jar
- ✓ Larger part of the consumers i.e. 128 (61.95%) are considering offers / discount at time of purchasing the specific brand
- ✓ Most of 75 (35.71%) consumers preferred both vitamins and minerals in their brand
- ✓ Most of the consumers i.e. 103 (49.05%) disclose that advertisement moderately influenced their decision to purchase the specific brand

Suggestions:

- ✓ Since a larger part of the consumers are purchasing the health drinks from departmental store and retail shop, the manufacturers are advised to maintain adequate stock of health drinks
- ✓ As most of the consumers preferred to buy up to 500 gram of health drinks, the sellers are advised to keep these quantities at maximum level
- ✓ Additional care must be exercised in designing the logo and packing of the health drinks as most of the consumers preferred the products based on these features
- ✓ Taxes of the product should be legibly written so that the consumers may identify the taxes included in the product
- ✓ Since a larger part of the consumers preferred *Bottle* packed health drinks, the manufacturers of the product are suggested to focus much in this type of packing

Conclusion:

In contemporary marketing, consumer is the chief player in any business and hence today every producer is considering the consumers' needs and wants. Even then it is very hard for the companies to convince and retain the consumers in one particular brand of choice. In this background, the current study has been undertaken to assess the consumers' degree of awareness and preference towards selected health drinks. The study unveils that a greater part of the consumers are highly aware of *date of expiry of the product* whereas low degree of awareness is identified with *taxes of the product*. Further, it is identified that most of the consumers preferred the brand, '*Boost*' followed by '*Horlicks*', '*Bournvita*', etc. and '*taste*', '*quality*' and '*price*' are the most persuading factors in purchasing the specific health drinks.

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